**Lynching** is an extrajudicial execution carried out by a mob, often by [hanging](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanging), but also by [burning at the stake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_by_burning) or shooting, in order to punish an alleged transgressor, or to intimidate, control, or otherwise manipulate a population of people. It is related to other means of social control that arise in communities, such as [*charivari*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charivari)*,* [riding the rail](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riding_the_rail), and [tarring and feathering](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarring_and_feathering). Lynchings have been more frequent in times of social and economic tension, and have often been means used by the politically dominant population to oppress social challengers.

Violence in the United States against [African Americans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Americans), especially in [the South](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_United_States), rose in the aftermath of the [Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War), after [slavery](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavery_in_the_United_States) had been abolished and recently freed black men were given the right to vote. Violence rose even more at the end of the century, after southern white Democrats regained their political power in the South in the 1870s. States passed new constitutions or legislation, which effectively [disfranchised](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disfranchisement_after_Reconstruction_era) most blacks and many poor whites, established [segregation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racial_segregation) of public facilities by race, and separated blacks from common public life and facilities. Nearly 3,500 African Americans were lynched in the United States between 1882 and 1968.

Lynching during the 19th century in the United States, Britain and colonies, coincided with a period of violence, which denied people participation in white-dominated society on the basis of race or gender after the [Emancipation Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emancipation_Act) of 1833.

Today lynching is a [felony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felony) in all states of the United States, defined by some codes of law as "Any act of violence inflicted by a mob upon the body of another person which results in the death of the person," with a '[mob](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crowd)' being defined as "the assemblage of two or more persons, without color or authority of law, for the premeditated purpose and with the premeditated intent of committing an act of violence upon the person of another." Lynching in the second degree is defined as "Any act of violence inflicted by a mob upon the body of another person and from which death does not result.” To sustain a conviction for lynching, at least some evidence of premeditation must be produced, but "The common intent to do violence" may be formed before or during the assemblage.”

**Questions to answer on a separate sheet of paper:**

1. Define **lynching.**
2. The reading says that lynching “have often been means used by the politically dominant population to oppress social challengers.” Who have we seen use lynching? Who have been their targets?
3. How might lynching “manipulate or control” a group of people? What might it force them to do/not to do?
4. How many African Americans were lynched between 1882 and 1968?
5. In the United States, how is lynching in the first degree defined? The second degree?
6. Were the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments **revolutionary** in terms of the freedoms that they granted African Americans?